



# NEWS RELEASE

## OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY FOR HOWARD COUNTY

**For Immediate Release:**

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January 10, 2018

### **Jessup Woman, 19, Pleads Guilty to 2017 Auto Manslaughter**

A 19-year-old Jessup woman has pleaded guilty to one count of negligent manslaughter by automobile in the January 2017 collision that killed a Halethorpe man in Howard County. Natalia Diaz-Valle, of the 8300 block of Lincoln Drive, pleaded guilty before Howard County Circuit Court Judge William V. Tucker this morning.

According to prosecutors, a 2007 Honda Accord, driven by Diaz-Valle, was fleeing from a state trooper shortly before 1 a.m. on January 30, 2017 after his radar unit clocked the Honda traveling 70 mph in a 55-mph zone on eastbound Route 100 near Snowden River Parkway. During the pursuit, the Honda reached a speed of approximately 100 mph. The Honda quickly exited onto Route 103 where it failed to stop at a red traffic signal at U.S. Route 1 and crashed into a 2007 Dodge Charger as it pulled out of a nearby fast food restaurant parking lot. The driver of the Charger, Biik Chong, 26, of Halethorpe was transported to University of Maryland R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center where he was pronounced dead. Assistant State's Attorney Tricia Cecil told the court that Diaz-Valle's blood tested negative for both blood alcohol and drugs.

Diaz-Valle will be sentenced on April 26.

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